UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/47/938
S/25715
4 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-seventh session
Agenda item 45
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 3 May 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

With reference to the letter dated 29 April 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations with regard to the incident that took place in the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus on 28 April 1993 (A/47/935-S/25692), I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement issued by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on 28 April 1993 (see annex), which contains the relevant facts and effectively refutes the unfounded allegations contained in the said letter and its annex.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 45, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. J. JACOVIDES
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Cyprus to the
United Nations

ANNEX

Statement issued on 28 April 1993 by the Government of Cyprus

At 9.40 a.m. today a police patrol boat, while on a routine mission within the territorial waters of the Cyprus Republic six miles south of the region of Zygi in the Larnaca district, came across a cargo ship that was on a 100° south-easterly course. The ship had no flag and its name was covered with paint. On account of this it was suspected of carrying narcotics or of carrying out other forms of illicit trade. The patrol boat approached within 20 metres of the ship and called on it repeatedly, through loudspeakers, in Greek and English, to stop. The patrol boat also called it on wireless Channel 16 and attracted its attention by blowing its siren.

In spite of all this, the ship failed to respond and continued on its course. Following that, the patrol boat went around the ship in order to force it to stop and tried again at least to communicate with it over the wireless. But the ship continued at full speed, estimated at 10 nautical miles per hour. As a consequence of this, the Commander of the police patrol board ordered warning shots to be fired above the bridge of the ship. This occurred at 10.25 a.m. In spite of all this as well, the ship continued on the same steady course. When the ship was about 17 miles beyond the territorial waters of the Republic, the patrol boat, on instructions, stopped its surveillance. On earlier instructions from Police Headquarters, the patrol boat had stopped its pursuit of the ship. The Cyprus Police Headquarters informed INTERPOL of the matter immediately.

During the last phase of the surveillance the police patrol boat was joined by another patrol boat of the Republic.

Around 12.00 noon, the British High Commissioner in Cyprus communicated with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Alecos Michaelides, with whom he talked about the incident, informing him that there were two Turks wounded on the ship and asking whether aid could be given to them by helicopter. The Foreign Minister gave his permission for the British Military Authorities to use helicopters from the British bases in Cyprus for the transport of the wounded, either to Cypriot hospitals, which were alerted in the meantime, or to the Akrotiri British military hospital, if this were deemed more practical.

At the same time the police patrol boats were ordered to cease their pursuit of the ship since it was already outside Cyprus' territorial waters. The pursuit stopped at 12.05 p.m.

A helicopter with a medical doctor aboard from the British bases went to the ship. The doctor advised the transportation of the wounded to a hospital, but the wounded refused to board the helicopter and the ship continued on its course.

The Cyprus Republic has not only the right but also the obligation to maintain surveillance and to inspect its coasts and its territorial waters for possible illegal trafficking in narcotics or arms. Systematic inspection is also carried out for ships moving suspiciously within the territorial waters of Cyprus.